

# ROCHESTER REVIEW

## SOCIAL STUDIES NEWSLETTER

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APRIL 2009

### Calling all Global Teachers

Jeremiah Frink at BOCES is beginning a project aimed to prepare an interactive online module for the final unit of Global History and Geography. Teachers can bring their best practices and video, electronic, or paper resources to an initial meeting at BOCES on Linden Road. The first meeting will take place on April 7th from 3-5 PM. Participation in the project will give you access to the final product.

### Explore Colonial Williamsburg

Want to take your kids to Colonial Williamsburg, but don't have enough time for the trip? No problem! Colonial Williamsburg is now offering electronic field trips. You can be provided with teacher resources to support live streaming video to your classroom computer or catch a broadcast on a local PBS station. There is a cost associated with registration, check out their website if you are interested: <http://www.history.org/History/teaching/eft/>

### Social Studies Council

Each school should have one representative attending monthly Social Studies Council meetings. It is imperative for each school to have representation on this council so they may have a voice in the department's decision-making. The next meeting will be held at the Congress Avenue facility on Monday, April 13. Representatives from secondary schools will attend from 3:30 - 4:30 and representatives from

James Buchanan  
April 23, 1791 - June 1, 1868



### TEACHING AS HISTORIANS



The Teaching American History Grant's *Teaching as Historians* project has begun. A strong cohort of teachers attended the kick-off on Superintendent's Day as well as our second session on April 1st. A Summer Institute focused on 19th century Rochester and its significance in the national story will take place the 2nd week of July. It's not too late to participate! Contact Steve LaMorte for more information.

### Social Studies Teaching & Learning Communities

"Social Studies TLC" Collegial Circles have begun. These meetings give teachers the opportunity to share resources and cooperate to improve their practice. The sessions will run from 4-6 p.m. at the Congress Avenue facility. Here are the next dates:

- Thursday, April 2: American History
- Tuesday, April 7: World History
- Thursday, April 9: AP US History
- Thursday, April 16: AP World History
- Thursday, April 30: Teachers with 5 years or less of experience

"The test of leadership is not to put greatness into humanity, but to elicit it, for the greatness is already there."



## *From the Director...*

Spring is finally here and with that, so is crunch time! With AP assessments just around the corner, I wanted to share with you some opportunities for students and teachers.

- Dr. Timothy Kneeland of Nazareth College is consulting with RCSD AP US History Teachers to provide professional development around writing on the AP exam. A College Board AP Exam rater, TAH Grant Consultant, and committed community member, Dr. Kneeland has the experience of working with both secondary students and teachers who are furthering scholarship in American History. I hope to see all AP US History teachers at the session on April 7th after school. Please encourage your students to attend the April Recess Review Seminar on April 21st as well. Dr. Kneeland will also be visiting classrooms of AP US students to deliver personalized sessions.

- For AP World Teachers and Prospective Students, the first annual Global Gear Up summer institute will be held this July 8th-28th. Students entering grade 9 who are interested in studying Global History at an advanced level are invited to participate. There will be 40 students and 2 teachers working together to learn more about the AP World Themes and explore global issues of concern in a hands-on investigative program. Teachers interested in teaching in the Global Gear Up program are encouraged to apply via the new online system that will go live in the coming weeks.
- A memo providing guidelines for designing local final exams will be disseminated under a separate cover. The responsibility for developing local final exams in grades 7,8, Global I and Economics will be devolved to the school site level for June, 2009. Guidelines will be forthcoming in this memo.
- Congratulations to the Franklin Finance Academy students and Ms. Kristen Bartnik for her preparation and student participation in the Federal Reserve Challenge hosted by M&T Bank on Wednesday, April 1, 2009! We are so proud of our students and the challenge they took on to enter this competition.
- April is Financial Literacy Awareness Month! Did you know that Junior Achievement of Rochester provides free programs to RCSD students? To request a program or learn more, contact JA at 327-7403!

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# **Social Studies Best Practices**

## **Setting the Stage for Learning**

Students learn more effectively when they already know something about a content area and when concepts in that area mean something to them and to their particular background or culture. When teachers link new information to the student's prior knowledge, they activate the student's interest and curiosity, and infuse instruction with a sense of purpose. Activating prior knowledge in students is a way to get students thinking about what they already know about a certain subject.

Here are some easy ways to activate students' prior knowledge:

- Concept Map
- KWL
- Graphic Organizers
- Anticipation Guides
- Reflections and Response Journals
- Thinking Out Loud

While activating prior knowledge through some of the methods noted here is worthwhile, you don't have to have premade worksheets and handouts copied off for your students. It is easy to add this strategy to your lesson by asking the right questions...



- What are other words we could use for...?
- What does this remind you of?
- Where have you seen this before?
- What do you remember about this?
- What made you think of...?
- Where or when would this be useful?
- Explain ... to me.
- How can we describe ... to someone?
- How can we use this outside of class?

In any case, incorporating the learner's preexisting attitudes, experiences, knowledge, and culture is an essential part successful learning experiences.

## On Behalf of Those Who Lie in Yonder Hallowed Ground

The Rochester Monroe County Freedom Trail Commission presents ON Behalf of Those Who Lie in Yonder Hallowed Ground on Friday April 17th from 12 noon- 2:30pm. A reception will follow from 2:30 -4pm Nazareth Arts College, 4245 East Ave Linehan Chapel ,Golisano Academic Center.

This program will commemorate the voices ,deeds and events that led to the Emancipation Proclamation, the enlistment of men of color in the Union Army and the deliverance of the nation from slavery . This multi arts program will include dramatic readings ,music and reenactments to make a truly exciting and historical program.

We would like to invite RCSD students to the event and would like your help to make this happen . This program will reinforce the learning of students in grade 4,5 8 and 11 who study American and local history. For more information, you can contact Delores Jackson Radney, RMCFTC Commissioner at 436 6453 .

## Let's Talk About Money

On Tuesday, April 21st, WXXI-TV is producing a one-hour, live program called Let's Talk About Money. The program will encourage public dialogue around the issue of financial literacy education for youth.

A diverse panel of area experts will take questions from an in-studio audience and phone callers. We hope to involve parents, students, educators and community leaders in the conversation. Segments from the national public television series BizKid\$ (<http://www.bizkids.com>) are being incorporated into the show. WXXI's Julie Philipp is moderating the discussion.

Program: Let's Talk About Money

Date: Tuesday, April 21

Rehearsal Time: Arrive in-studio by 7:15 p.m.

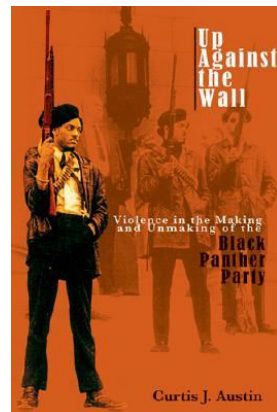
Broadcast Time: LIVE 8 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Location: Studio A -- WXXI, 280 State Street, Rochester NY

Moderator: Julie Philipp, Managing Editor, WXXI's Center for Public Affairs, RSVP for live audience seating to: Shelley Figueroa: [sfigueroa@wxxi.org](mailto:sfigueroa@wxxi.org) or at 585-258-0278

## Collegial Book Circle

Stefan Cohen will be leading a collegial book circle this Spring with the book *Up Against the Wall: Violence in the Making and Unmaking of the Black Panther Party* by Curtis J. Austin. Sessions will be a combination of discussion of the book and the Black Panthers as well as exploring the book's application in the classroom. Meetings will be taking place in April and May. Contact Stefan for more information.



## Turning Points Essay Contest

The Rochester City School District is sponsoring an essay contest centered around the book *Turning Points: Defining Moments That Shaped the Character of Top Business Leaders* by Randy Schuster. The book recounts the stories of Rochester area entrepreneurs. The authors of the top 35 essays will have their essays published in a new book and the authors of the top 5 essays will earn internships with some of the local leaders featured in the book. Copies of the book will be available free of charge to students in secondary school libraries. More information and details about the contest are attached to this newsletter.



## Get Your Passports Ready!

An amazing opportunity is available for a number of teachers to travel to Novgorod, Russia for a month this summer. Each morning, participants will attend classes on Russian language, history, and culture, while afternoons will be spent at archaeological sites in the Novgorod area. You will also get a chance to visit St. Petersburg and the Hermitage museum. An informational flyer is attached to this newsletter; you can contact Liza Steffen at Monroe High School with questions ([liza.steffen@rcsdk12.org](mailto:liza.steffen@rcsdk12.org))

# FEATURED TEACHER

## Daniel Wright

**School:** Monroe High School

**Years in District:** 6

**Subjects Currently Teaching:** Global History & Geography II

**Favorite Social Studies Topics:** United States and World History 1900-present

### Why does Social Studies Rock?

Social studies rocks because it is only the subject that constantly changes. Daily events in our world allow students to make connections to what happened hundreds and thousands of years ago.

### Proud Teaching Moment:

My proudest moment is when I collaborate with my fellow teachers to implement an idea or lesson that reaches the students. Recently myself and fellow colleagues organized a writing lunch group for students in all our classes that has benefited all the students that have participated in it. Collaboration and connections to students are my proudest moments.

### About Dan...

In my personal life I am married to my high school sweetheart Carrie who teaches kindergarten in the RCSD, we have a beautiful five month old son (Daniel William) and we also have Golden Retriever named Winnie. My School life outside the classroom I coach JV Softball and I am also sophomore class advisor. I have a quote that I use in my class that I really represents what I want for my students and myself as a teacher: "The greatest danger in life is not that we aim to high and miss it, it is that we aim to low and we reach it"

### Dan was nominated by Carmenza Gutierrez:

"He has great ideas and is always looking for the best way to reach his students."



Do you know a teacher who should be recognized for their achievements? Is there someone in your building who is caring, witty, good-looking, and of course, passionate about Social Studies? Do you just want to toot your own horn? If you answered yes to any of these questions, contact Steve LaMorte and nominate someone to be our next featured teacher!

## Important Dates

### Monday, April 6

- World Religions Seminar

### Tuesday, April 7

- Global History Collaborative @ BOCES

### Monday, April 13

- Social Studies Council

### Monday, April 27

- Picturing America Party (Secondary)

### Tuesday, April 28

- Picturing America Party (Elementary)

### Monday, May 11

- Environmental Politics and Culture in Modern American History - Dr. James Spiller.

### Monday, May 18

- Social Studies Council
- World Religions Seminar

## Native American Studies

Perry Ground, from the district's Native American Center has prepared a great presentation to review basic concepts about Native Americans which can help your students on the NY State 8th grade assessment. If you'd like Perry to come in to present to some of your classes, you can call the center at 324-9305 and schedule a time. He has had great success with this program.

## The Boundary Waters Treaty

In celebration of the centennial of the Boundary Waters Treaty, Niagara has designated 2009 as The Year of Our Shared Waters. The treaty is an excellent example of international cooperation between countries who share a common border. Check out the website below for more information and resources to share with your class.

→ <http://www.oursharedwaters.com/>